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RATIONS IN POLAND

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SUMMARY

1. Germans in the Incorporated Provinces and the General Government receive the same rations as in the Reich. In general, Poles receive about half as much, and Jews one-quarter as much. Poles in the Incorporated Provinces receive larger and better diet than those in the General Government, except for heavy workers in the latter area, who are now entitled to supplementary rations apparently not available in the incorporated districts.

2. Although food supplies are sufficient, the German policy of servicing German shops and restaurants first results in failure to fulfill legal rations for Poles and Jews, to whom many foods are forbidden; the latter are allowed only black bread, jam, sugar, and potatoes.

3. There has been very considerable illegal withholding of foodstuffs, for which severe penalties have been imposed.

RATIONS IN POLAND

I. OFFICIAL RATIONS FOR GERMANS, POLES, AND JEWS.

Official rations for Germans are the same as in the Reich. For Poles and Jews, however, official rations vary widely as between the Incorporated Provinces and the General Government, and even more widely among the cities within each territory. The most recent information on ration quantities is presented in the table on the following page.

LEGAL FOOD RATIONS IN POLAND
(In Grams per Week)

	Bread	Meat	Fats	Sugar	Potatoes	Milk	Cheese	Cereal Products	Coffee Substitute	Jam
Incorporated Provinces										
Germans:[a]										
Normal consumers	2325	250	219	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Heavy workers	3725	600	319	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Very heavy workers	4725	850	588	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Poles:[d]										
Normal consumers	2250	250	110	250	2250	1150	63	225	--	100
Heavy workers	2250	250	110	250	2250	1150	63	225	--	100
Very heavy workers	2250	250	110	250	2250	1150	63	225	--	100
Jews:[e]	450	0	0	35	2000[f]	0	0	0	--	55
General Government										
Germans:[a]										
Normal consumers	3000	250	219	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Heavy workers	3725	600	319	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Very heavy workers	4725	800	588	225[b]	3500	[c]	125	150	62	175
Poles:[g]										
Normal consumers	2250	100	---	75	2000	----	---	50	31	125
Privileged consumers[h]	2250	225	125	75	4000	----	---	50	31	125
Heavy workers	2850	300	150	137	4000	----	---	113	62	125
Very heavy workers	3650	400	225	137	4000	----	---	113	62	125
Jews:[e]	450	0	0	35	2000[f]	0	0	0	--	55

[a] October, 1943, except for Bread rations, which are as of September. Bread rations for normal consumers were increased in mid-October to 3000 grams; presumably workers rations were also increased, but quantities are not known.

[b] Plus extra ration of 1000 grams for preserving season.

[c] Skimmed milk locally rationed. Whole milk reserved for children and expectant and nursing mothers.

[d] Spring, 1942

[e] Warsaw ghetto, summer, 1942. Assumed to be typical of Polish ghettos.

[f] Early summer, 1941. No quantities mentioned since.

[g] Official rations for October, 1943 (Krakauer Zeitung, September 26, 1943)

[h] Persons employed in offices, establishments and bodies of public legal status, and employees of enterprises "entrusted with special tasks in the German interest". If employed in enterprises which run canteens, such persons receive weekly, as additions to canteen meals, 63 grams of cereal products, 63 grams of flour, and 31 grams of sugar. Wives and children of privileged consumers and special worker categories also receive extra rations.

Members of the League of Loyal Poles (Verband der Leistungspolen) receive the same rations as Germans. These are Poles who have proved their loyalty to the Reich and who perform the same work as Germans with similar qualifications. Certain categories of Polish workers in the General Government now receive supplementary rations; as far as is known, however, no supplements are available to Polish workers in the Incorporated Provinces for heavy manual work.

Polish children in the General Government receive half as much bread as adults; their other rations are the same as those allotted to adults. No details are available concerning rations for Polish children in the Incorporated Provinces.

Rations for the eastern territories of former Poland, beyond the Bug (absorbed by the Ukraine and Ostland commissariats), are unknown, and this category has therefore been omitted from the table. Germans settled in these areas may be assumed to receive rations equal to those in the Reich. As for Poles and Jews, doubtless approximately the same ratio prevails as in Latvia; i.e., "Aryan natives" receive roughly half as much food as German residents, and Jews roughly one-quarter as much.

II. AVAILABILITY OF OFFICIAL RATIONS.

There is no indication that total Polish food supplies are insufficient to provide legal rations. However, the German practice both in the incorporated area and in the General Government is to make local food supplies available first to shops and restaurants serving Germans, and only later to Polish and Jewish shops. The effect is that Germans are able not only to obtain their legal rations, but also to purchase meals in restaurants and to secure most of the available supplies of unrationed foods. Since there are usually few shops reserved for Poles and Jews, and since there are severe restrictions upon the hours during which these two classes may purchase food, such shops frequently run out of food before all customers are served.

Ever-growing lists of forbidden foods for Poles and Jews are an added insurance against any failure in the supply of rationed and unrationed foodstuffs to Germans in Poland. The list of foods which Poles may not buy includes butter, lard, eggs, macaroni, rice, meat, poultry, game, fish, pastry and cakes, fruits and berries, luxury and dried vegetables, and several other items. The only foods permitted to Jews are black bread, jam, sugar, and potatoes when available. All other foods are forbidden. Penalties to Poles and Jews for dealing in prohibited foods are severe, yet such dealing undoubtedly continues.

III. FOOD CONDITIONS AS COMPARED WITH A YEAR AGO.

Little information is available regarding this year's food conditions, except in the Incorporated Provinces. In this most fertile part of Poland (containing half the former Polish wheat and rye area, two-thirds of the potato area, and a fourth of the sugar beet area), food supplies should be sufficient for the inhabitants, provided exports to Germany and supplies to German residents and troops do not cause too heavy a drain. As in 1942, crop conditions appear to be normal or better, and some concessions seem to have been made to the Poles in regard to food, with the purpose of increasing production. Such amelioration as has occurred does not much affect food conditions for the Jews, to whom opportunities for buying outside the rations are limited by their strict confinement to the ghettoes. Nevertheless, better harvests do facilitate their access to foodstuffs, however illegal.

The General Government, despite German efforts, is not yet a surplus area, though food production is said to have been raised. The Germans expect this area to support German troops stationed there or in transit, but they do not count on exports until their "reorganization" of agriculture in the area has been completed. Meanwhile, expropriation and resettlement have disorganized production, and peasant resistance continues. The Germans claim, however, to have increased the bread rations of Warsaw

Poles to the level of those recently announced for the Reich. If true, this would represent -- at least for Warsaw -- a considerable improvement. Also, supplementary rations recently allotted to Poles working for the government or for German interest, and to some Poles doing heavy manual labor, will undoubtedly aid in improving the situation here.

Little is known about the eastern district (now absorbed into the Ostland and the Ukraine). Agriculture here, as in eastern Galicia, has suffered greatly from successive Russian and German occupation. At present this section of former Poland has the same difficulties as Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia; i.e., increasing shortages of agricultural equipment, fertilizer and manpower, aggravated by German requisitions and restrictions, to which there is widespread peasant resistance. With a normal harvest, however, the area should be able to feed itself this year, as its population is largely rural. Conditions in the cities will doubtless continue to be bad, especially if the area again becomes a battleground.

In connection with food conditions in eastern Poland, it should be noted that from generations of a fat-deficient diet the eastern Poles have developed the ability to make more efficient bodily use of fats and carbohydrates. Hence, organic underfeeding is probably less serious here than in western Poland, where generations of a diet

comparatively richer in fats has produced a more lax metabolism resulting in quicker deterioration.

IV. EVASION OF DELIVERY REGULATIONS BY FARMERS TO SUPPLY THE BLACK MARKET.

Polish resistance to German regulations concerning the delivery of foodstuffs has been evident since German occupation began. This year the German press has printed frequent reports of executions and penal sentences for illegal transport and slaughter of cattle and pigs, theft of ration cards, smuggling of sugar, meat, and cattle from the Incorporated Provinces to the General Government, etc. While the total amount of food involved is not known, the following examples give some idea of the size of these "illegal" operations:

(a) A Wartegau butcher was sentenced to death for the slaughter of 160 head of cattle;

(b) A Danzig paper announced four death sentences and seven sentences to penal servitude for illegal cattle slaughter (apparently all involved were members of the same organization);

(c) From one group of eleven Poles, three were sentenced to death and seven to penal servitude for smuggling "large quantities" of sugar, meat, and cattle to Poland from a frontier district. (The leader escaped, and the traffic is undoubtedly continuing.)

(d) A group of twelve Poles received death sentences for the slaughter and illegal sale of one hundred pigs.

(e) A Polish woman from Upper Silesia was sentenced to death for stealing and selling four thousand ration cards.

(f) A Poznan paper reported the trial of ninety six people for illegal slaughtering of pigs. This group was said to have been operating for years.

Such measures as the severe sentences passed on farmers for failure to deliver grain and potatoes, the bribes and premiums frequently offered for the fulfillment of quotas, and the declaration of martial law in rural areas at harvest time prove that farmers have evaded German regulations with considerable success. That much of the food thus kept from German hands goes into illegal trade seems probable. Poles claim, however, that the Black Market is supplied not by peasant hoarding or illegal slaughtering but by the Germans themselves, with food which they steal from Polish exports to Germany or from army stores. The food withheld by peasants or secured by illegal operations like those mentioned above probably serves to supply a "White Market" from which those Poles and Jews who are financially able can supplement their rations at fairly reasonable prices, considering the risks involved. This form of resistance is commonly practiced elsewhere in Europe.

V. FOODSTUFFS AVAILABLE ON THE BLACK MARKET.

Little is known concerning foods sold on the Black Market. Information reaching the Polish Information Center in New York indicates that many Poles meet even their most essential needs by illegal purchases, despite the danger involved. The special difficulties placed in their way by means of restricted shopping hours, segregated shops, and small supplies often make this necessary. Presumably also, some of the "extra rations" of dried and fresh fruit, cheese, fish, soup cubes, honey, etc., issued to Germans alone, find their way (at high prices) to such Poles as can pay for them.

VI. OFFICIAL PRICES OF FOODSTUFFS.

No information is available regarding official prices of foodstuffs. The trend in food prices is indicated by the following table, presenting a cost-of-living index for Warsaw in the period August 1939 - July 1940. The base used is August 1939 = 100.

Commodity group	December 1939	March 1940	May 1940	July 1940
Cost of living in general	269	463	546	433
Foodstuffs only	278	614	743	561

Source: Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, September 1939 - June 1941. Polish Ministry of Information.